

A Dinner Invitation From Jesus (Ruth 2:14-17)

Proposition: Just as the Moabitish Ruth was invited to eat at the table of the wealthy Land owner Boaz, so every believer is invited to the gracious table of the Lord Jesus.

- I. The Exceptional Privilege of this Invitation** (Vs. 14a)
 - A. An Unmatched Privilege (Vs. 14a)
 - B. An Unmerited Privilege (Vs. 14a)
- II. The Exclusive Portion of this Invitation** (Vs. 14)
 - A. A Surviving Portion (Vs. 14a-b)
 - B. A Sustaining Portion (Vs. 14c-d)
 - C. A Sufficing Portion (Vs. 14e-f)
- III. The Exceptional Product of this Invitation** (Vs. 15-17)
 - A. A Freeing Product (Vs. 15)
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A Dinner Invitation From Jesus

Ruth 2:14-17 In 1991 the Leadership Journal reported that all the Americans who ate dinner last night, 22 percent ate alone. Nearly one-quarter of our nation experiences regular levels of isolation and loneliness. I have no doubt that in the nearly 18 years since the number of lonely dinners has increased, but I believe that far more Christians neglect a daily invitation to dine on the plenty of God's word w/ the company of the Lord Jesus and prefer to go their spiritual nourishment alone.

Communion with the Lord Jesus is to happen a great deal more than just every 5th Sunday. We are invited daily to draw nigh unto His table of plenty. Our invitation reads "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. We see this invitation in shadow, here with Ruth & Boaz. Just as the Moabitish damsel Ruth was invited to eat at the table of the wealthy

Land owner Boaz, so every believer is invited

I. The Exceptional Privilege of This Invitation

I have often thought of what a privilege it would be to spend some time with preachers of a bygone day. Men like George Whitefield
Charles C. Spurgeon - Robert Murray McNamee

Yet there is no greater privilege than to sit down

A. An Unmatched Privilege - Now let's remember what Ruth is doing. Her status is not much more than that of a beggar. Search the field for dropped stalks of wheat. And now the owner of the field is inviting her to his corporate lunch. Can you imagine the CEO of the Company you work for, inviting the homeless guy washing windshields for pocket change, to his corporate luncheon. It's unheard of. Yet every day, the man walking, miracle working, peace speaking, self sacrificing, sin defeating, death defying, highly exalted King

B. An Unmerited Privilege - Now let's remember what Ruth had done to merit such an invitation. Was she of a royal lineage? Did she have great standing within the community? Was it the great knowledge that she had of harvesting grain? No! Boaz just look across the field and for some unknown reason set his love and affection on her. ⁽⁴⁾ Deuteronomy 7: 7-8 "The Lord said, 'Were it not for Grace' where would I be. Wandering down some road of sin" but now I've been invited to his table. ⁽⁵⁾ What Privilege!

II. The Exclusive Portion of this Invitation

In the rest of verse 14 we see the portion that is afforded Ruth. We see what Boaz had in store just for her. This intimate dinner scene is exactly what she needed.

1) ...is invited to the gracious table of the Lord Jesus.

2) ...to sit down daily with the meek and lowly Saviour.

3) ...highly exalted King of kings and Lord of lords, is inviting you and I to his table every day! No invitation on earth can match it!

John 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

4) Deuteronomy 7:7-8 *The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you,* John Trapp said, "God loved them because he loved them. He chose them of his love, and then loved them for his choice.

5) ...What a privilege! One author wrote: How sweet too it is to see that service gives no place nearer than grace. The feeblest babe is as welcome as the oldest, most faithful and most successful servant. Let us remember this as we gather about our Lord, and let it silence all thought in our heart of any right of nearness beyond that which grace gives to all who are the Lord's alike.

- 1) ...healthy state for a Christian is that of unbroken and intimate fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ."
- 2) ...why folks are burning out, burning up, instead of burning on, is there has been no "mealtime with Jesus." Vance Havner once said, "If we don't come apart we will come apart." He also made this wise observation: "There is no work that is more likely to crowd out the quiet hour with God than the very work that draws strength from that quiet hour." Jesus made his disciples come apart with him, away from the needs of the crown, away from the calls for help. We must do the same if we are to survive the labors of the Christian life.
- 3) As we gather first of all from the Word for ourselves, as gleaners; next as we profit from the ministry of the reapers, representing as they do, the ministers of Christ and the Word, we find ourselves finally in His very presence. Now Boaz personally handed her food. So Christ Him--self feeds our souls as we follow in His way.
- 4) ...but we want to thrive in it! And where is the victory in the Christian life? In the death burial and resurrection of Jesus: John 12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.
- 5) ...always more! Psalms 23:5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Psalms 16:11 ...in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Charles Spurgeon said "The most healthy state

A. A Surviving Portion - (14a-b) This meal that Boaz is referring to was around noon. Some would call it lunch or dinner, but it was that midday meal. After working hard in the fields

the back breaking labor of harvesting + gleaning this meal was a time to rest, refresh, and replenish their bodies just to survive the labor." I believe the biggest reason why folks are burning out, ⁽³⁾

B. A Sustaining Portion - Notice the progression. She was with the gleaners, at the table she's with the reapers and finally Boaz is personally feeding her. One author writes "As we gather He hands he not wheat but parched corn. Signify in Egypt, leeks, onions, cucumbers, wildness. Manna but in Canaan: parched corn (Josh 5:11-12). This was quick food. We don't just want to survive the Christian life ⁽⁴⁾

C. A Sufficing Portion - The word sufficed means to be full, to be satisfied. She came to the table weary, thrashing and hungry! She left ^{rested} refreshed, quenched, and filled. The words indicate that she couldn't eat it all. There were leftovers when it comes to the grace of God manifest in his word, you can never devour it all there's always more ⁽⁵⁾

III. The Exceptional Product of This Church

I have experienced times of refreshing in moments of personal devotion that have worked its way out into months and now down to now and throughout the to

what we see in Ruth. A furtherance of labor productivity.

A. A Freeing Product - vs 15. Boaz commanded his laborers not to hinder the gleaning of Ruth. Let her go and work and labor where ever she will in my field. This moment of fellowship at the table lifts her underlies to her gathering. What if she has said "no". You just stay right where you are "missy".

If you will start meeting w/ Jesus at his table of

B. A Furthering Product - Not only will he free us but he'll further us. Boaz commanded that hand fuls on purpose be left. When reapers would cut, make piles to be tied into bundles. Boaz wants them to leave behind some of these untied bundles. I can see her, her fellow as you left some. "Go ahead" says the reaper. With mouth wide open, ⁽³⁾ she even tears she quickly takes

C. A Fullfilling Product - (vs 17) Not only did she labor in gathering, but labored in what was gleaned. And when she saw the result, it was more than she ever imagined from a days heaving. An ephah of barley. That's 10 homers. 1 homer was all that could be taken of the measure in wilderness. Her time at the table w/ Boaz ⁽⁴⁾ ment fullfilling more!

IV Close - Are you eating alone? You have an invitation to His Table! Why are you eating alone. Look at all she gained by sitting at his table!

- 1) ...in her life. One preacher wrote: You can serve God energetically without worship, but you cannot serve God effectively without worship.
- 2) ...table of fellowship, you would find boundaries of service removed and places that you had no idea you could go opened up for your labors.
- 3) ...she quickly takes up the purposeful hand full and keeps on gleaning! Sometimes as we glean and labor, we think I'm not getting anything done. I'm barely getting by. But as we meet with Jesus. And we take our refreshment from his hand, we will discover in the most unlikely places that which will further us along in the work. Whether down at the mission, or at the jail, or on a doorstep or in a Sunday school class, wherever I've labored, there have come those unexpected hand fulls on purpose that excite, and encourage and further along the work of the Lord!
- 4) ...fulfilling moments in the harvest! **John 15:5** I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. **John 15:8** Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. **John 15:16** Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: